

Immigration

F r a u d

Protecting all immigrants



Los Angeles County
District Attorney's Office

Los Angeles has long been a major destination of immigrants looking for an improved life. Sadly, however, many who come to this county are targeted and victimized by fraud artists who prey upon the vulnerability of recent immigrants.

Fraud directed at legal and undocumented immigrants is a serious problem in Los Angeles. The District Attorney's Office, in coordination with several local, state, and federal agencies, is resolved to confront this type of unlawful activity.

If you or someone you know has been victimized by dishonest consultants, phony immigration "specialists," or people posing falsely as attorneys, we will help you. Immigration fraud is illegal. We can only defeat it if victims are willing to come forward and report this activity.

Nobody, regardless of his or her residence status, should be subjected to immigration fraud. As District Attorney, I am committed to prosecuting those responsible and to protecting all immigrants from these intolerable acts.

S. L. Cooley
Steve Cooley
District Attorney

The D.A. and Immigration Fraud

California law protects consumers from dishonest business practices. Through criminal and civil lawsuits, the District Attorney's Consumer Protection Division (CPD) enforces these laws and guards against fraudulent activity.

CPD treats businesses engaging in immigration fraud as the lawbreakers that they are. In this effort, CPD has organized the Los Angeles Immigration Fraud Task Force, a multi-agency law enforcement effort which attacks immigration fraud through the investigation of fraudulent activity, the prosecution of fraud artists, and educational efforts. Those charged with fraudulent immigration practices face severe monetary fines and potential jail sentences.

Immigration Fraud: While immigration fraud can take many forms, most commonly, it occurs as false promises that sound too good to be true. By making false promises, fraudulent consultants attempt to justify the excessive "service" fees they demand. Once a victim pays the large sum of money, the con artist refuses to aid the individual or reports him or her as undocumented.

Immigration Consultants: California law regulates providers of non-legal immigration services. The more you know about what they can and cannot do for you, the less likely you are to become a victim.

Immigration consultants may assist you in completing forms, translating materials, obtaining and submitting necessary documents, and finding legal aid. However, they are *not* lawyers, may *not* give legal advice, and do *not* necessarily have *any* special training. Be wary and look for the following:

- All immigration consultants must file a \$50,000 bond with the California Secretary of State's Office or be subject to criminal charges. This bond is important because the money is used by the State to benefit any person damaged by fraud or other unlawful acts. You have the right to request proof of this bond. If a consultant cannot show you proof, look for somebody else to help you.
- Consultants should always use a written contract when making an agreement with you. This contract must be approved by the State of California. Furthermore, the law requires that the contract be in English and your native language. Make sure it lists all services to be performed and their total cost. You have the right to cancel the contract for any reason within three days and to receive a full refund.
- It is illegal for a consultant to use the terms "Notario" or "Licenciado" or to misrepresent himself or herself as an attorney. Consultants must disclose in advertising that they are not lawyers.
- Consultants should not split fees with attorneys in any matter.

Attorneys: Attorneys, who must have proof of bar association membership, may also assist you with your immigration status. Immigration attorneys must disclose in their advertising that they are active members of the State Bar and licensed to practice in California. To verify if an individual is a California attorney, contact the California State Bar at (213) 765-1000. If you are working with an attorney, understand that he or she should never split fees with or give a referral fee to immigration consultants.

Where to Find Help

Reporting Possible Crimes: If you believe you have been cheated by an immigration consultant, you can get help. The District Attorney's Office urges you to notify authorities when fraud occurs. To report a possible crime, contact your local police or sheriff's department. Or, if you would like to file a consumer complaint about fraudulent activity, contact the Department of Consumer Affairs at (213) 974-1452.

You may also call the District Attorney's Consumer Protection Division at (213) 580-3273. We are here to help you, regardless of your residence status, and to ensure that all immigrants are protected from fraud.

Seeking Legal Aid: If you would like to speak to an attorney about how to get your money back from an immigration consultant who you believe cheated you, there are many agencies that can assist you. The **Los Angeles County Bar Association** can refer you to qualified attorneys. Call (213) 243-1525.

If you need legal assistance but cannot afford an attorney, you may contact the following organizations:

- Los Angeles County Bar Immigration Project**
(English and Spanish speaking)
(213) 485-1872
- Central-American Resource Center**
(CARECEN; English and Spanish speaking)
(213) 385-7800, ext. 130
- Asian-Pacific American Legal Center**
(Chinese, Korean, and other languages)
(213) 977-7500
- Mexican-American Bar Association**
Lawyer Referral Service
(English and Spanish speaking)
(213) 622-8890
- Mexican-American Legal Defense Educational Fund**
(MALDEF; English and Spanish speaking)
(213) 629-2512

Remember, no one — neither immigration consultants nor attorneys — has "special connections with the INS." No one can guarantee you any result. Do not pay money for these kinds of promises. False statements such as these are warnings to stay away.

Free Legal Service Providers

The U.S. Department of Justice has compiled the following list of organizations which provide free legal aid for individuals interested in changing their immigration status.

- Immigration Services of Santa Rosa**
132 N. Maclay Ave.
San Fernando, CA 91340
(818) 361-4341
(May charge nominal fee)
- Chabad Lubavich Russian Synagogue**
7636 Santa Monica Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90045
(323) 848-2999
- International Institute of Los Angeles**
435 S. Boyle Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90033
(213) 264-6217
(May charge nominal fee)
- International Institute of Los Angeles**
14701 Friar St.
Van Nuys, CA 91411
(818) 988-1332 or 1333
(May charge nominal fee)
- Catholic Charities of Los Angeles**
Immigration and Refugees Services
1530 West 9th St./P.O. Box 15095
Los Angeles, CA 90015
(213) 251-3471
(May charge nominal fee)
- Barbara J. Darnell, Esq.**
3255 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 904
Los Angeles, CA 90010
(213) 386-8900
- Public Counsel**
601 S. Ardmore Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90005
(213) 385-2977
- Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles**
1550 W. 8th St.
Los Angeles, CA 90017
(213) 640-3800
Toll free: (800) 399-4529
- EI Rescate Legal Services**
1340 S. Bonnie Brae St.
Los Angeles, CA 90006
(213) 387-3284
- San Fernando Valley Neighborhood Legal Services, Inc.**
13327 Van Nuys Blvd.
Pacoima, CA 91331

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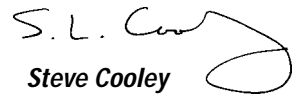
由洛杉磯縣
檢察官辦公室提供

爲了找尋更好的生活品質和環境，多數的新移民都選擇了洛杉磯爲他們的新移民地。但很不幸的，他們同時也成爲一些不法之徒所詐騙的主要對象。

長久以來，在洛杉磯許多詐騙案件中，不只是新移民受騙，很多以失去合法身份的人士及非法入境者爲了取得合法的身份也付出了不少的代價。我們地檢處，在此配合各市立，州立，聯邦機構且已下決心採取行動對付這些不法之徒。

再一次的提醒大家，移民詐欺行爲是犯罪的，大家應該挺身出來檢舉，不可讓這些不法之徒繼續行騙。倘若你或你所認識的人曾經被這種不誠實的移民律師或無律師執照的“法律顧問”或虛假的“移民專家”所欺騙，我們可以幫助你。

任何嚮往移民的人，不論是合法或非法，都不應該成爲移民詐騙的對象。以一個在職地方檢察長而言，我堅決要掃蕩，而以重罪控告這些不道德的違法人士，保護無辜的消費者不要再受到無謂的損失。


Steve Cooley
District Attorney

地檢處與移民欺騙

加州的法律保護消費者的利益，使他們不成爲商業詐欺的對象。從一些刑事和民事的訴訟案中，消費保護機構 CPD (CONSUMER PROTECTION DIVISION)，已開始執行在這方面的法規來保護消費者的權利，對於一些從事移民服務的非法公司，CPD將對這些不法之徒以重罪起訴。CPD在洛杉磯已成立一個由多層執法機關聯合的專案小組，以調查，執法和倡導的方式來嚇止移民詐騙的行爲。這些不法的移民詐騙者，將會受到嚴厲的處份，包括罰金或坐牢的可能。

移民詐欺：詐欺的方式很多，比較常見的就是蓄意欺騙的“保證”。這些“保證”往往聽起來非常吸引你。而在“保證”之後這些不法人士會要求增加巨額的“服務費”。等受害者付了大筆錢之後，這些騙子就不再繼續協助受害者，有些甚至還去揭發受害者的不法身份。

移民顧問：加州有法律來規範移民顧問公司。民眾如果能夠了解到移民顧問公司能做的是那些服務，那成爲受害者的機率就會減少。

移民顧問公司依法只能協助顧客填寫移民表格，做翻譯，諮詢，送件及協助尋求法律諮詢服務，但切記移民顧問不是律師，他們沒有受過專業的訓練，也無法提供顧客法律上的建議，不能告訴顧客以那種方式辦移民或工作證。請注意以下事件：

■ 移民顧問公司必須向州務卿辦事處申請公司登記並繳交 50,000 元做爲公司的保證金〔BOND〕。此保證金是補助那些被欺騙或是在其他法律訴訟案件中的受害者。顧客有權利向移民顧問公司索取及查尋其公司的合法營業執照。如果移民顧問公司無法提出合法証照，那麼顧客應另外尋求有合法執照之公司的幫助。

■ 顧客和移民顧問公司在協議時，要有一個書面上的簽字合約書。合約書也必須要經過加州政府的批准。法律上有規定合約書要用英文及顧客的母語寫成，其內容應列出所有需履行的條例和總價款。顧客有權利在三天內取消合約並取得全數退款。

■ 移民顧問公司不能以“公証”或“有執照”的措詞或術語來誤導顧客他或她是律師。

■ 不管在任何情況之下，移民顧問絕不可以和律師分帳。

律師：合格的律師，必須備有加州律師公會頒發的登記會員証，才可協助顧客辦理移民事項。如果需要查明某律師是否有加州律師執照，請打加州律師公會的電話 (213)765-1000。如果你是在律師樓上班，你更應該了解法律規定是不允許你拿介紹費或是與律師分帳的。

到那裡找尋幫助

通報可能性的犯罪：如果你認爲你被移民顧問公司欺騙了，你仍可得到協助。地檢處呼籲。當詐欺事件發生時，受害者應出面檢舉，或舉報有可能將發生的詐欺案，並和當地警察局或郡治安官聯絡，你也可以向消費者事務局提出告訴，電話是 (213)974-1452。

或者請聯絡 CPD，他們的電話是 (213)580-3273。不管你的身份是合法或非法，CPD都會協助你。保護民眾是我們的職責。

尋求法律上的協助：如果你要找律師替你從移民顧問公司拿回所付出的錢，執法單位可以建議及提供相關機構來協助你。如需要找一位合格專業的律師，洛杉磯縣律師協會也可以幫助你，電話是 (213)243-1525。

如果你無法支付律師費用但需要法律上的幫助，請與以下的組織聯絡：

Chinatown Service Center
(精通中文，韓文及其他語言)
(213) 485-1872

Asian-Pacific American Legal Center
(精通中文，韓文及其他語言)
(213) 977-7500

『切記，任何人-不論是移民顧問或是律師-都不會與移民局有“特別關係。”沒有人可以保證你任何的勝算。切勿支付金錢給與類似的承諾。如此不實的托辭正是一個該遠離的警告。』

免費法律服務

如果你希望更改你的移民身份，以下的組織是由美國政府推薦，能幫助你提供免費法律諮詢的服務機構。

Immigration Services of Santa Rosa
132 N. Maclay Avenue
San Fernando, CA 91340
(818) 361-4341
(另索基本手續費)

International Institute of Los Angeles
435 S. Boyle Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90033
(323) 264-6217
(另索基本手續費)

International Institute of Los Angeles
14701 Friar Street
Van Nuys, CA 91411
(818) 988-1332 or 1333
(另索基本手續費)

**Catholic Charities of Los Angeles
Immigration and Refugees Services**
1530 West 9th Street/P.O. Box 15095
Los Angeles, CA 90015
(213) 251-3471
(另索基本手續費)

Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles
1550 W. 8th Sreet
Los Angeles, CA 90017
(213) 640-3800
Toll free: (800) 399-4529

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13327 Van Nuys Boulevard
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(818) 896-5211



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